DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 166 971 FL 010 083

AUTHOR Ingram, D. E.
TITLE The Case for a National Language Policy in Australia.
PUB DATE Oct 78
NOTE 29p.; Paper presented at the State Conference of the Modern Language Teachers Association of South Australia (Adelaide, Australia, October 27, 1978)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$2.06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Bilingual Education; Cultural Factors; *Cultural Pluralism; Educational Policy; Elementary Secondary Education; Higher Education; Interpreters; *Language Attitudes; *Language Planning; Language Programs; *Language Role; Language Skills; Multicultural Education; *Multilingualism; National Programs; Official Languages; *Policy Formation; Public Policy; Social Factors; Translation
IDENTIFIERS *Australia

ABSTRACT

The present state of language programs in Australia, the lack of a coherent language policy, important considerations for developing a national language policy, and long-term outcomes of a language policy are considered. Australia needs to consider the role of languages in society and the society's need for language skills. Among the present conditions are: declining language enrollments, lack of bilingual education instruction, poor translation and interpreter services, and reduced employment opportunities for adults who lack English skills. There has been a failure to respond to the nation's linguistic diversity. The interaction of cultures will be affected by the country's language policy. It must be decided whether multiculturalism also means multilingualism, and ways of developing favorable cross-cultural attitudes must be analyzed. In planning, a clearly defined and nationally accepted proficiency scale is needed. Adoption of the national language policy entails a statement of national belief in certain cultural, linguistic, and social values, and the policy must be embodied in legislation to guarantee linguistic and cultural rights. Adoption of a national language education policy is necessary for the success of a national language policy. (SW)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED166971

THE CASE FOR A NATIONAL LANGUAGE POLICY IN AUSTRALIA

D. E. Ingram
Mount Gravatt College of Advanced Education,
Brisbane

FL010083

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

D. E. Ingram

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

This paper was originally presented to the 1978 State Conference of the Modern Language Teachers Association of South Australia, Adelaide, October 27th, 1978.

I. INTRODUCTION

Australia's policy towards its languages is reminiscent of J.R. Lowell's lines from The Biglow Papers II:

> *"Ez to my principles, I glory*
> *In hevin' nothin' o' the sort;*
> *I ain't a whig, I ain't a Tory,*
> *I'm jest a canderdate, in short."*
> *[Quoted in Davidoff 1942:286]*

In principle, one would expect a largely migrant nation such as Australia set in a linguistically diverse part of the world to be conscious of the need to husband its language resources yet key indicators suggest otherwise : fewer and fewer students study a language in secondary school, the introduction of language teaching into the primary school has been, at best, haphazard, and, whether they cater for Australian or international markets, industry and commerce are largely indifferent to their employees' language skills.

According to the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary, a policy is "a course of action adopted and pursued by a government, party, ruler, statesman, etc.; any course of action adopted as advantageous or expedient." A national energy policy is one that identifies the sources of energy available to the nation, its energy needs, and how those needs are to be met and the resources used for maximum benefit to the nation. Similarly, a viable and articulated national language policy would identify the language resources of the nation, the role of language and the various languages in the nation, the nation's needs for language skills, how the resources are to be managed and exploited to meet those needs, and how, in doing so, the nation's general well-being is

to be promoted. A policy that provides a basis for management and planning must be more than a pious affirmation of belief in the value of language learning or of respect for a person's right to his own language and it must be more than an informed expression of opinion on how language teaching should be planned. It must grow out of fact, identify values, establish social objectives, and outline action to reach those objectives. If it is to meet the nation's needs, it must be coherent and comprehensive, embracing the whole society and all the linguistic issues pertinent to the society. The policy must grow out of a clear perspective of the place of languages in the society, i.e., it must, first, ask what languages and dialects are used, where, when, between whom, and for what purposes; what the actual needs, especially unfulfilled needs, for language skills are; and what languages are to be developed and for what purposes. It must, in short, identify the present nature of the society, especially insofar as this is linguistically relevant, and establish developmental goals for the society in 20, 50 or 100 years time. The goals adopted must be recognized and accepted by the society. A national language policy, then, may be designed to meet present needs and to promote attainment of the social goals. Thus, an adequate national language policy encompasses a realistic picture of the present, a vision of the future, and identifies the action and machinery by which to satisfy the present and attain the vision.

No national language policy of this sort has been enunciated for Australia. Various reports have considered the place of language learning in education [e.g., Australian Academy of the Humanities 1970; Working Party on Languages and Linguistics, Australian Universities Commission 1975; Department of Education 1976; Watts, McGrath and Tandy 1973] and a few have looked at aspects of the role of language in Australian society [e.g., Commonwealth Advisory Committee 1970; the

Galbally Review 1978; Commissioner for Community Relations 1976]. However, none of these meet the definition of a national language policy enunciated earlier. The most comprehensive is, undoubtedly, The Galbally Review which, although commendable within its terms of reference, does not adequately consider the society as a whole, is principally concerned with so-called migrant communities, omits the Aboriginal community, makes relatively brief reference to the English-speaking community, and does not attempt to account for Australia's international needs. If we genuinely want and envisage a multicultural society, multiculturalism must be held relevant to the whole society and policies developed to ensure that the actual needs of all sectors of the society are met and that all have equal opportunity to benefit from the society's linguistic and cultural resources. Only a clearly enunciated, overt, well argued, comprehensive and publicly accepted policy can provide a firm basis for planning or encourage employers, education authorities and decision-makers of all sorts to take account of language and to make available the resources needed to meet the inherent needs. Finally, if Australia is a multicultural society and if genuine multiculturalism, in which each person's linguistic and cultural heritage is respected and available to enrich others' lives, is a goal for social development, then a clear national language policy is desirable as an overt sign that the nation and government are serious in their expressions and that constructive systematic action is being taken to pursue the goal. The Prime Minister stated in May 1978 that

> *"The Government ... agrees Australia is at a critical stage in developing a cohesive, united, multicultural nation. It agrees there is a need to change the direction of its services to migrants and that further steps to encourage multiculturalism are needed."*
> [*Fraser 1978:3*]

And elsewhere,

> *"The Government accepts that it is now essential to give further encouragement to develop a multicultural attitude in Australian society."* [*ibid:15*]

But culture without its essential realization, without language, the thing that carries it, is non-sense. If multiculturalism means anything, it must entail national multilingualism which, in practice, implies a network of bilinguals [cf. Kaplan 1978]. Thus, if a nation espouses multiculturalism, it must also espouse a clear national language policy.

II. THE PRESENT SITUATION

The language situation in Australia at present can, at best, be described as confused. It is widely acknowledged that Australia is a multicultural hence, ipso facto, multilingual society and its major trade is with non-English-speaking nations. On the one hand, in fact, realization of the role, values and importance of second language learning in promoting the domestic and international interests of Australian society has probably never been greater. In his 1977 election policy speech, the Prime Minister advocated universal bilingualism. Most States have set up committees to advise either the Minister or Department of Education on the ways in which the education system should react to meet the needs of the multicultural society. The Report of the Committee on the Teaching of Migrant Languages in Schools advocated an expansion of the teaching of community languages [Department of Education 1976:107]. The Schools Commission [1978:104-105], in its

Report for the Triennium 1979-81, "fully endorses" [ibid.:104] the recommendation of the Australian Ethnic Affairs Council [1977] that Australia be regarded as a multicultural society in which all people have the right to maintain and preserve their language and culture, that English Second Language teaching be improved, bilingual education expanded, and schools encouraged to develop the teaching of community languages. Similarly, government committees have advocated expanding Asian language teaching [Commonwealth Advisory Committee 1970:90,99] and recent public opinion polls have shown strong public support for second language teaching in schools. A Morgan National Opinion Poll published in June, 1978 showed that 90% of Australians thought a "foreign language" should be taught [The Bulletin, June 6th, 1978, p. 25] while a Gallup Poll in May 1977 found 49% asking for a second language to be compulsory [The Courier Mail, May 3rd, 1977, p. 28]. Some reflection of these figures is seen in recent increases in numbers in private, continuation and ethnic school classes [cf. also Department of Education 1976:67, 217].

Yet, on the other hand, teachers are only too well aware that, in many parts of Australia, language teaching in the regular school system is in a parlous state. Matriculation enrolments have declined from 40.3% of all students in 1967 to 16.4% in 1974 [Working Party on Languages and Linguistics 1976:18] and probably not more than 10% currently. In 1975, only 1.4% of bilingual primary school students were studying their first language [Department of Education 1976:18,104] and, in 1974, only 1.3% of matriculation students took a community language other than German [Working Party on Languages and Linguistics 1976:18].

In the general social sphere, similar confusion with its corollaries of inefficiency, waste and injustice continues. All major

political parties espouse integrationist or multicultural policies; yet the Australian Ethnic Affairs Council [1977:12] has accused the education system of being assimilationist in its over-concentration on English teaching and, in ignoring bilingual education, of wasting the ability of children of non-English speaking background, and of undermining family and social cohesion. The Schools Commission [1978:107-108] comments similarly, notes that changes have barely begun, and observes the deleterious effects of the present situation on many children's educational attainment, bicultural identity and self-esteem. In addition, the Galbally Review [1978:37] quotes the Schools Commission's 1975 estimate that only one-third of children needing special help with English were receiving it. This constitutes discrimination on a large scale since such children are precluded from educational success. In addition, the very fact that their language and culture is apparently not considered worthy of inclusion in the curriculum is an attack on the child's self-concept, one aggravated by the widespread use of placement tests (I.Q., aptitude, attainment, etc.) which are linguistically or culturally weighted against him..

Australia's failure to come to grips with language needs or even to manage its own language resources is reflected in disturbing observations outside education. Translation and interpreter services, for example, remain grossly inadequate to meet either domestic or international needs. A few years ago, Australia's interpreter services were described as "the worst in the world" and "a national disgrace" and, though some improvement has occurred with the mounting of more training programmes and the formation of the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI), the situation is still far from acceptable. In Queensland, for example, the government refuses to recognize that there is any need for translators and interpreters; untrained persons who happen to have a little of both languages are

still used to interpret in hospitals; in 1977 the State Library had to scrap several thousands of dollars worth of posters advertising their multilingual collection when, although the translation had been done by the Commonwealth's Migrant Interpreter Service, they were found to contain serious translation errors; and there are long delays in getting even small amounts of translation done by the Interpreter Service. Internationally, the nation fares no better and, in fact, its own resources are so slight that foreign nationals continue to be used in trade negotiations, embassies, parliamentary delegations, and so on. A recent Foreign Affairs Association submission to the Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence highlighted this regrettable situation when, in complaining of the deficiencies in language training given to Foreign Affairs staff, it described how an Australian embassy had been deliberately misled for months by its locally-employed translator who had purposely mistranslated in order to disguise the political significance of local press items [Courier Mail, 18th May, 1978, p. 15]. Similarly, Bostock [1973] has shown how Australia's lack of language skills during the Vietnam war made her unfortunately dependent on news and information handouts from other countries with consequent adverse effects on Australian policy and action.

At the same time, those resources Australia does have are being allowed to decline. Firm figures on this are hard to find since only the 1976 census has asked relevant questions. The Morgan Poll referred to earlier found that 29% of Australians could speak or understand a foreign language, an increase of 15% since 1963 [The Bulletin, June 6th, 1978, p. 25] but, in fact, these figures are not very informative. No proficiency level is indicated and, since the largest percentage is for French at 11%, the totals clearly include people with the merest smattering of the language remaining from school days. In addition, the picture they provide is very different when they are compared with other

demographic figures. 11.6% of Australia's population was born outside Australia, Britain and Ireland and 21.9% of Australian children have at least one parent born in a non-English speaking country [Working Party on Languages and Linguistics, Australian Universities Commission 1975:46; the Galbally Review, Appendixes:21]. Yet, place of birth gives only a very partial reflection of initial language skills since many children who seem, from such figures, to be of English-speaking origin are, in fact, born to parents brought up in so-called "ethnic" communities. Thus, even the Morgan Poll's very conservative figure of 71% of Australians with no language but English marks a very significant decline in real language resources. The nation's management of its linguistic resources has been much more wasteful if one considers the disappearance of some hundreds of Aboriginal languages and the fact that 90% of the 200 or so Aboriginal languages still spoken have not been adequately transcribed and will probably disappear when their hundred or fewer present speakers die [Kaplan 1978:2].

This profligacy is not only itself wasteful but the attitude that generates it also produces other waste and very considerable injustice and inequality in society. We have already observed the injustice done by the education system to non-native English speaking children. In addition, many highly trained adult migrants are forced to work in inferior jobs where their real skills are not used since, although the society will not allow them to work unless they speak English, it also fails to provide adequate opportunities for them to acquire relevant English skills. Thus, a Greek-speaking medical practitioner can not register even though he might intend working in a largely Greek-speaking practice; a Turkish nursing sister in Queensland has tried for three years to become registered but her ESP skills are insufficient and there is nowhere in Queensland she can improve them; and a Cypriot Primary School principal has been turned away from two C.A.E.'s

in Brisbane because his English is too weak for study purposes and the Colleges cannot offer him the needed English courses. Similar situations are replicated thousands of times around Australia [cf. Galbally Review 1978:44]. We have already seen that translator and interpreter services remain grossly inadequate and necessarily mean that non-native English speakers (especially the estimated 400,000 with virtually no English) suffer discrimination in many forms from legal to health to information [cf. Galbally Review : Chapters 4, 7; Fraser 1978: 3; Martin 1972:16]. Thus, it is a sad comment on Australia's provision of information and on our apparent belief that non-English speakers either do not wish to participate in democratic processes or are incapable of doing so that, after 200 years of migration, the Galbally Review should be the first report tabled in Parliament in a language other than English [Fraser 1978:1]. Similarly, the legal and judicial system has generally failed to acknowledge the linguistic diversity of the community, the Galbally Review [1978:Chapters 4, 7] urging that more court documents be translated and interpreter services expanded. Even in library services the linguistic and cultural diversity of Australian society is not adequately acknowledged, Clyne quoting figures to show that the non-English speaking community was largely ignored [Clyne 1976:8].

In brief, the present lack of a coherent language policy and programmes to implement it wastes valuable human resources otherwise available to enrich the nation and prevents large segments of the population from having access to resources which it is their right as Australians to draw upon [cf. Martin 1972:2, 6]. In fact, the Galbally Review estimated that nearly half a million Australian residents were disadvantaged in this way [cf. Fraser 1978:5]. Finally, to the extent that language is a part of ethnicity, such discrimination as has just been discussed and which results from our failure to take adequate

account of the nation's linguistic diversity would seem to be contrary at least to the intent of Australia's own Racial Discrimination Act 1975 and to the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination to which Australia is a signatory. The former, for example, expressly outlaws in Clause 9(1):

> *"... any act involving a distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of any human right or fundamental freedom in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life."*

It would be incorrect to state that Australia is entirely without a national language policy since failure to plan itself implies a policy. It certainly does, however, lack an explicit policy and we are left with a confusion of high ideals, injustics, and superficialities in which the key linguistic issues are not fully thought through or planning carried out on an informed basis. What is required is, in fact, a thorough language planning exercise in which the role of languages in the society and the society's needs for language skills are investigated, a national language policy developed and used in formulating a national language education policy, and public support for both policies assured through active public discussion and informed debate at all stages.

III. SOME QUESTIONS FOR A NATIONAL LANGUAGE POLICY TO RESOLVE

It is not possible in a paper of this length to outline in full the issues to be considered in developing a national language policy or

to spell out the desirable contents of such a policy. Many are implicit in what has preceded but let me draw a few out further and pose some questions to be answered.

First, a national language policy must envisage a particular view of society; that is, it must ask what sort of society is wanted in Australia in 10, 50 or 100 years' time. Martin quotes the then Prime Minister in 1949 as describing the desired society as

> *"... the ideal of one Australian family, devoid of foreign communities, thus preserving our homogeneity and solidarity as a nation."*
> [*in Martin 1972:14*]

This was transferred by implication into a language policy by Albert Monk, the former ACTU President, who stated in 1956:

> *"One of the first causes of friction we encounter is the fear that the presence of foreigners will undermine our own way of life. And Australian men and women ... are not reassured by hearing foreign languages spoken in public places."*
> [*quoted in Bostock 1973:41*]

Both these quotes seem to assume that social and cultural structure is static, that Australian society and culture are to be conserved and maintained in their current form. However, no living culture, no dynamic society, is static and it would seem desirable that planning be such as to enable social and cultural evolution to occur in as enriching a manner as possible by drawing on all the resources available to it. If this social view is accepted, then the language policy corollary must be such as to ensure the maintenance of the languages and cultures of the society and to permit the interaction of the cultures.

If this cultural evolution is to occur, there must be interaction between the cultures on a basis of equality and mutual respect. Again this implies that the languages must co-exist and that networks of linguistic interaction in all the languages develop. One cannot, for example, claim to accept the equality of cultures and the mutual benefits to be acquired by participants in different cultures if one insists that all interaction between the cultures take place in one dominating language.

This implies that, in formulating a national language policy, some form of social engineering is to be undertaken. The rights and wrongs of such activity have been much (if emotively) discussed in the Queensland press in recent months. However, if one is prepared to bring together scores of different cultures and races, one is also obliged to seek to develop the society in such a way that harmony will result and the maximum good for all be achieved. To this extent, the readiness of the people to demand language teaching is not relevant. A national language policy is not just a reflection of what people are asking for since, if it were, it would be largely redundant. Rather, it constitutes an overview of society, it provides a perspective that individuals caught in the web of society may be unable to see, and it provides a blueprint for the future development of society; individuals tend to respond most loudly to immediate needs; language planners, as futurologists, must look at how the society is developing, anticipate changes, and argue their views to the society. If this future-orientation is missing, then education and other services, which take time to change and too easily tend to be entangled in the web of present demand, become irrelevant. The difficulties being experienced currently in changing from a French-German-based language teaching system to a more diverse system exemplify the problem. Clearly, in developing a national language policy, the first and most fundamental questions that must be

asked concern the nature of society today and what the nation wants the society to become. This is a task not only for linguists and educators but also for sociologists, economists, demographers and a variety of national planners.

So far the discussion couldseem to have dwelt largely on communication needs and cultural evolution. Of equal importance if multiculturalism is to become the pattern for the social structure is the need to ensure an harmonious society and, hence, to ensure favourable cross-cultural attitudes. Thus, in developing a national language policy the question must be asked to what extent language has a part to play, how favourable attitudes are developed, what form of language policy is needed to mitigate the development of antagonistic, introspective, cultural enclaves, and what form of language policy best contributes to the fullest human and cultural development of individuals and of the society as a whole.

In answering questions concerning the pattern of future development of the society, language planners must also ask other questions. First, for example, they must ask to what extent notions of justice, equality and equal access to resources are to be characteristic of the society. If they are, then each individual's rights to his own language and culture must be recognized as is done in the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education which Australia signed ten years ago and as,we saw, is implicit in our own Racial Discrimination Act of 1975. If such rights are recognized, then there are profound implications for the language of education, the language of the work place, and the language of government and other services. Canada's laws, for instance, allow its citizens to demand government services in either French or English. Equally, recognition of the individual's language and culture rights raises the need for additional language

skills for all citizens to permit ready interaction for family, social, commercial, political or any other purpose. Should such rights also extend, for example, to parent-school relationships, to medical services or to entertainment? If they do, profound implications emerge for the training of personnel, the encouragement of culturally diverse entertainment activities, the provision of school-based interpreters, and obligatory language study for teachers in training.

A further fundamental question about the nature of society that must be asked relates to the very notion of multiculturalism. The statements quoted earlier from the Prime Minister in 1949 and from Albert Monk imply that Australians want a homogeneous society while the tacit assumption of the present discussion and of many of the actions taken by politicians recently (e.g., in permitting the extension of ethnic radio) is that multiculturalism is good and is wanted by the people. Yet it is not clear that this is necessarily the case, nor is it clear what is meant by multiculturalism. The first of these implied questions can be established only by surveying society for its opinion; the second requires basic definitions to be clarified and applied to the Australian context. In particular, it must be decided whether multiculturalism also means multilingualism, and to what languages and cultures the freedom to exist (and, therefore, to be taught and used in daily intercourse) is to apply. In other words, one has to clarify the form of multiculturalism that is to be adopted, whether the spirit of pluralism embraces all languages and cultures or only the numerically or culturally strongest, in which case the cut-off points for the former and the criteria for judging the latter have to be determined. Similarly, one must decide what attitude is to be taken to sub-cultural dialects or to the different languages of people of the same national origin (e.g., Serbian, Croatian and Slovenian). The acceptability of Australian English is no longer a matter of contro-

versy but there remains considerable confusion over the notions of correctness and acceptability and over the attitude to be adopted, for example, by the school system or by radio and television, towards Aboriginal English, the Italian dialects, and variant forms. An authoritarian academy ruling on correctness or style in English as the Académie Française does for French or the Academy for the Hebrew Language does in Israel [cf. Rabin 1976:3] is not appropriate but a national language policy that clarifies the notions of correctness and acceptability can only benefit the school system by making it less subject to criticism from employers and the public for allowing the language to "decline", by leaving it better able to concentrate on the development of practical communication skills, and by clarifying for it the basis on which to choose the forms of the languages to be taught.

In developing a national language policy, it is not only the nation's internal interests that must be considered. Language planners must also ask what the nation's real needs are in the areas of understanding of, and communication with other countries. This will require examination of trading and investment patterns, diplomatic relations, tourism, and responsibilities in development aid. It will require identification of the languages that are relevant, the purposes for which they are used, the types and levels of skills required, and the number of persons familiar with the language that will be required. That number will, of course, need to be considerably greater than those directly involved in international endeavours since in all fields experts emerge from a larger pool of persons with relevant skills and since the development of understanding of one nation by another implies the existence of a pool of understanding in the nation, i.e., of a number of citizens imbued with understanding of the other country.

Within a national language policy, it is necessary to consider

for what purposes the various languages are to be used and, therefore, the skill levels that are to be developed. In planning, it is clearly desirable, therefore, that some clearly defined and nationally accepted proficiency scale be available. The existence of such a scale is clearly valuable in specifying skill levels for employment positions, in setting goals for language teaching, and in clarifying for learners the nature of their own skills and what they can realistically achieve in courses. The absence of such a scale or even of a clear notion of how such a scale might be defined makes all discussion of language skills vague and unsatisfactory. This is currently exemplified by what seems to be a rather loose approach to the specifying of levels for accreditation of translators and interpreters by NAATI. Such a scale is currently being devised for use in English Second Language programmes by the national ESL Overview Committee.

It is already clear that in formulating a national language policy a large number of non-language issues also need to be considered. Thus recognition of a language need implies recognition of cultural needs also and so, in devising a national language policy, language planners must ask similar questions about culture to those already presented concerning language : what cultures and what aspects of cultures are to be taught and where; what is to be done where cultures or components of cultures are in conflict; what is to be done where important aspects of cultures conflict with existing social structures (e.g. religious festivals and Anglo-Australian work patterns); is the culture to be propagated the contemporary culture of the country of origin, the remembered culture of the migrant group or the form that is starting to emerge in Australia; and so on.

In discussing the questions a national language policy must

resolve, I have undoubtedly only glossed key issues. Each of these raises contentious problems and I have not, for example, attempted to discuss matters that affect one language, even English and its role [see Kaplan 1978 for a useful discussion on this point]. As the pre-requisite sociological and sociolinguistic research is carried out, other issues for clarification and resolution will emerge. In general, a national language policy will have to encompass all those issues that emerge from multiculturalism as it affects all Australians whether black or white, native or migrant, issues ranging from education and personal development to social variation in linguistic forms to Australia's international relations.

IV. OUTCOMES

In the long-term, the outcome of a national language policy should be the type of society initially identified as the developmental goal. More immediate and tangible outcomes fall into two broad categories: adoption and implementation.

Adoption of the national language policy entails, first, its wide-ranging discussion and promulgation as a statement of national belief in certain cultural, linguistic and social values and as a nationally accepted blueprint for future social development. Second, the policy must be embodied in legislation approved by parliament in order to guarantee linguistic and cultural rights, in order to permit individuals some form of re-dress in the event of their rights being infringed, and in order to assure the resources needed for programmes under which the rights can be realized.

Under implementation outcomes are, first, the establishment of

an instrumentality to supervise the policy, second, policies and programmes in education, and, third, provision of other services.

Just as the Racial Discrimination Act 1975 is supervised by the Commissioner for Community Relations, so a national language policy must be supervised and supported by a body that can monitor developments, assist, in particular, language teachers, and advise governments and society at large on language-related matters. The ideal instrument for this purpose is the National Language Information and Research Centre, a proposal on which has already been sent to the Commonwealth Government by AFMLTA and ALAA. It is also the most suitable body to guide the development of a national language and national language education policy.

The success of a national language policy depends particularly on the education system and so adoption of a national language policy must lead to the formulation of a national language education policy. Conversely, a rationally based language education policy can exist only in the context of a national language policy, i.e., in some clearly enunciated view of the role of language in the society.

A full discussion of a national language education policy is not possible here but let me indicate some of the things to be considered. First, the national language policy will identify the languages used or needed in the society. Yet it is unlikely that all these can be taught in the formal school system and educationists must ask which are to be included and what facilities, if any, are to be provided for teaching the others. The age at which second language study is to be undertaken must be decided for diverse clientele, the respective responsibilities of pre-school, primary, secondary and tertiary education established, the roles of ethnic schools and "Saturday Schools" clarified, the whole

system co-ordinated, and the viability of its various parts assured. In other words, a national language education policy must ask what languages are to be taught, how widely, where, by whom, to whom, and at what age.

The general goals for social development and the national language policy will have to be translated into specific objectives for language teaching to different students, the diverse characteristics of the students identified, and Australian-designed and-based materials and methods evolved to match. In particular, the purpose of community language teaching must be clarified in the total social context so that the students to whom community languages are to be taught can be identified. At present, there seems to be a belief, reflected in, for example, the funding of projects under the Galbally Report, that community language teaching is for language maintenance to "migrant" children. This entails a narrow view of multiculturalism but, if it is to be broadened, the aims of more general community language teaching must be clarified. Account will have to be taken of at least three types of students : those who already speak the language and whose needs fall either in the language maintenance area or in the acquisition of a standard dialect, those whose parents speak the language but who, essentially, do not do so themselves, and those who are learning it as a second language. Equally, teacher resources and the needs for teacher education will have to be considered and teacher education and re-education programmes devised for teachers of different backgrounds (e.g. native speakers, overseas trained teachers, and non-native speakers) and for teachers in different circumstances (e.g. in bilingual programmes, FL or L_2 contexts, language maintenance classes, in pre-school, primary, secondary or tertiary classes, and so on) [see Ingram 1977 for further discussion on teacher education].

Other questions to be considered in devising an adequate language education policy include whether certain languages are to be offered throughout the system; whether regionalization or school specialization is to take place and, if so, how free choice is to be offered to students; how Primary and Secondary programmes are to be coordinated to avoid mismatch and the corollary deleterious effects on learners that occurred following the introduction of Primary French in Britain; what re-education Secondary teachers are to have to cater for new clientele; whether existing language teachers are to be re-trained to teach other languages; and whether it is better to give more emphasis in Primary School to languages not widely taught in Secondary School. If a serious attempt to teach language is to be made, means must be found to ensure that a worthwhile level of proficiency is reached. In particular, this will mean deciding what total time allocation is necessary for different languages in the varying Australian context to ensure that the different clientele gain something of value from the second language programme, a common time suggested being 800 to 1000 hours for significant proficiency [cf. Kaplan 1978a:5]).

Similarly, decisions will be needed on the development of more effective teaching methods, especially methods that match the distinctive aims of L_2 teaching in a multicultural society. Methodological questions go, in fact, far beyond language learning per se and entail notions of the nature of society, a person's role in it, and the right of the individual to challenge the established order. Thus, for instance, a "digestive" or "banking" [Freire 1970, 1970a] view of knowledge and learning as exemplified by traditional or audiolingual approaches is compatible with education seen as social conditioning to fit the learner for life in the established system; a more dynamic approach which sees language learning as self-discovery, or as a process of using one's own innate capacities in order to learn is not. Rather,

the latter approach leads the learner to perceive himself as being able to self-direct, as having the capacity to perceive goals and work for them, as having the power and right to question authority rather than just accept, and eventually, as having the ability to promote change in the society. In other words, a national language education policy does not just concern itself with trivial questions of how to have the learners ingest syntax and vocabulary but must lead to a fundamental reappraisal of the nature of education and of the indivIdual's role in society.

If language learning answers real needs in the society, it is necessary that language planners and educationists ask how it is to be encouraged : is it to be compulsory and, if so, at what ages; if it is not to be compulsory, how can you ensure that learners keep on long enough to get benefit and enjoyment from it; can prospective employers, especially the Public Service, be encouraged to give recruitment preference or salary loadings to persons with second language skills; how can you overcome the practical problems of a large and scattered school system where timetabling difficulties, rapid changeover in staff, adverse learning conditions, or just the competition of other subjects or the need to ensure high examination grades for tertiary entry all encourage students to opt out of language study.

Bilingual education is clearly essential in a multicultural society if the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education is to be observed and if due recognition is to be given to languages other than English. However, it poses some difficult questions for a national language education policy : e.g., is bilingual education to be a right, if not, who can claim it; at what ages is it to be offered and in what languages, using what materials; how do you cater for the one Vietnamese or Turkish or Greek entrant to a country Primary or

Secondary school; at what age or stage does a changeover to English-medium occur, what then happens to the child's other language, and what relationship is to exist between the two languages; and, finally, where are the teachers to be recruited, how are they to be trained, and what special skills must they develop?

In discussing the development of a national language education policy, I have done little more than give an inventory of questions to ask and have done little more than brush the surface of a complex problem [see also Kaplan 1978a:8-9]. The development of such a policy is a task of very considerable magnitude; yet it is essential that it be carried out, first, so that coordinated planning may take place; second, so that administrators confronted with a nationally accepted language education policy will ensure that viable language study remains in the curriculum; and, thirdly, so that those who allocate resources may be confident that they are being well and justifiably spent.

In discussing the formulation of a national language policy I referred to some of the areas other than education in which action will be needed as an outcome of the policy. These include provision of translators and interpreters; more simultaneous translation facilities; the employment of bilingual staff and interpreters in most aspects of industry and commerce and in all service industries from hospitals to marriage counselling to the police force to the unions; the use of controlled English and languages other than English in the press and media; improved communication and information facilities using other languages; and the recognition of cultural as well as linguistic diversity throughout society, from employment conditions to food handling.

There is one further outcome of a national language policy that requires comment, viz, the need, once the policy has been formed

and in the course of its development, for a major public awareness campaign to ensure that all Australians are aware of the real nature of their society, of the values offered by multiculturalism, of the importance of language skills, and of the unique contribution language learning can make to their children's development and the nation's well-being. They must be persuaded that the basic ideals and values to which Australian society aspires demand that the rights of all to their own language and culture be recognized and that, for themselves, learning a second language provides valuable skills, another way of seeing the world and of coping with reality, and another means of access to a richer, more harmonious and rewarding life in the multicultural society and world [cf. Kaplan on "Broadband", March 20th, 1978, quoted in Quinn 1978:2]. This public awareness is valuable in itself but it is also essential, first, in order to develop in people, especially students, the willingness and determination to persist with the inevitably hard work required to develop language proficiency. Secondly and more fundamentally, it is essential if administrators are to be persuaded to allocate the resources that are required in order to turn the ideals of a policy into the realities of an implementation programme.

V. HOW TO DEVELOP A POLICY

Finally, let me say something very briefly about how the nation must go about developing a national language policy. Clearly, it is too large and complex a task to be undertaken by a part-time committee of teachers or academics. Desirably it should be undertaken by an institute such as the proposed National Language Information and Research Centre with the power to employ additional, specialist researchers. We have seen that a wide variety of information and statistics is needed ranging from present and future social structure, to health statistics,

to translator and interpreter demands, to tourist and trading patterns. Perhaps most important of all is an extensive sociolinguistic survey to establish what language skills exist; how many speakers of each language there are and where they are located; what languages and dialects are used or needed, when, where and why; what changes are taking place in those languages and dialects, and what the attitudes of people are towards the various languages and dialects.

It was observed earlier that informed public discussion of the issues must be generated at all stages of the development of a national language policy. The central work of formulation must, however, be done by a committee of experts drawn especially from language planning, from the various linguistic sciences, from applied linguistics, from language teaching and from sociology. At the least, a Senate Committee or a Committee of Inquiry comparable to the Galbally Committee and able to draw submissions from a wide range of expert areas is needed. Whatever approach is used, considerable and varied expertise must be available to the committee responsible, it must be given both the time and resources to sponsor surveys to obtain the essential base data, and it must be given the finance and freedom to draw on the experience already gained in this area by workers in developing countries as well as in other modern multicultural societies such as Canada, the U.S., or the European Economic Community. The Modern Language Teachers Associations and other interested bodies can help the process by exerting pressure on the State and Federal Governments to establish the necessary language planning organization. They can best do this by themselves generating discussion of the issues, through representations to the governments, through news releases and "letters to the editor", and by having questions asked in Parliament. In this, the pressure that language teachers can apply will be much greater if they themselves are united and if they join with other org-

anizations of like mind (such as ethnic organizations) to present a united and widely representative front.

VI. CONCLUSION

The task that is involved in the development of a worthwhile national language policy is of mammoth proportions. Nevertheless, it is one that has already been undertaken by many countries in a lesser state of development and with considerably inferior economic resources. Furthermore, if Australia wants to be successful in a multilingual world, if Australians are serious about multiculturalism, or even if we want to survive as a united and harmonious society, it is a task that we must confront without delay. Our competitive edge in the international market is clearly fast diminishing. We have a diverse nation whose communities have justifiable pride in their own heritage. More positively, we have an opportunity that has been open to no other nation to learn from others' mistakes, to draw on a unique array of cultural and linguistic resources, and to utilize that wealth for a richer, fuller life for all our citizens. A great Australian poet, a member of the oldest culture in Australia, wrote a few years ago:

> *"Pour your pitcher of wine into the wide river*
> *And where is your wine? There is only the river...*
> *... Do not ask of us*
> *To be deserters, to disown our mother,*
> *To change the unchangeable.*
> *The gum cannot be changed into the oak.*
> *Something is gone; something is surrended, still*
> *We will go forward and learn.*
> *Not swamped and lost, watered away, but keeping*
> *Our own identity, our pride of race.*
> *Pour your pitcher of wine into the wide river*
> *And where is your wine? There is only the river.*
> [*Kath Walker*]

In this of all States, let us plan to keep the wine.

REFERENCES

1. Australian Academy of the Humanities. 1975. Survey of Foreign Language Teaching in the Australian Universities 1965-1973. Canberra: Australian Academy of the Humanities.

2. Australian Ethnic Affairs Council. 1977. Australia as a Multicultural Society: Submission to the Australian Population and Immigration Council on the Green Paper, Immigration Policies and Australia's Population. Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service.

3. Australian Federation of Modern Language Teachers Associations and the Applied Linguistics Association of Australia. 1978. A National Language Information and Research Centre: Submission to the Commonwealth Government. Brisbane: Mount Gravatt C.A.E.

4. Bostock, W. 1973. "Monolingualism in Australia" in The Australian Quarterly, Vol. 45, No. 2, June 1973, 39-52.

5. Clyne, M. 1976. "Immigrant Languages" in Australia. Hobart: University of Tasmania.

6. Commonwealth Advisory Committee. 1970. The Teaching of Asian Languages and Cultures in Australia. Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia.

7. Commissioner for Community Relations. 1976. First Annual Report 1976. Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service.

8. Davidoff, H. 1942. The Pocket Books of Quotations. New York: Pocket Books.

9. Department of Education. 1976. Report of the Committee on the Teaching of Migrant Languages in Schools. Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service.

10. Fraser, M. 1978. "Migrant Services and Programs: Statement by the Prime Minister", statement to the House of Representatives, Canberra, May 1978.

11. P. Freire, P. 1970. Cultural Action for Freedom. 1970; rpt. Harmondsworth: Penguin; 1972.

12. P. Freire, P. 1970a. Pedagogy of the Oppressed. 1970; rpt. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972.

13. Ingram, D.E. 1977. "Language Teaching in the Pluralist Society: the Challenge for Teacher Educators" in Babel, Vol. 13, No. 1, April 1977, 9-18.

14. Kaplan, R.B. 1978. "... To do what, and with what, and to whom..." forthcoming in Ethnic Studies, 1978 (mimeograph).

15. Kaplan, R.B. 1978a. "Language Planning", paper to the Modern Language Teachers Association of N.S.W., Sydney, May 1978 (mimeograph).

16. Martin, J.I. 1972. "Migrants: Equality and Ideology", Meredith Memorial Lecture, 1972. Melbourne: La Trobe University.

17. Quinn, T.J. 1978. "A National Language Policy?", editorial in Babel, Vol. 14, No. 1, April 1978, 2.

18. Rabin, C. 1976. "Language Treatment in Israel: Especially the Development and Treatment of Hebrew" in Language Planning Newsletter, Vol. 2, No. 4, November 1976, 1-6.

19. Review of Post-Arrival Programs and Services for Migrants (the Galbally Review). 1978. Migrant Services and Programs. Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service.

20. Schools Commission. 1978. Report for the Triennium 1979-81. Canberra: Schools Commission.

21. Watts, B.H., McGrath, W.J., Tandy, J.L. 1973. Recommendations for the Implementation and Development of a Program of Bilingual Education in Schools in Aboriginal Communities in the Northern Territory. Canberra: Department of Education.

22. Working Party on Languages and Linguistics, Australian Universities Commission. 1975. Languages and Linguistics in the Australian Universities: Report of the Working Party on Languages and Linguistics to the Universities Commission, May 1975. Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service; 1976.